

Preface

SAMİM AKGÖNÜL

This book is the fruit of the thoughts of a group of researchers, historians, political scientists, lawyers each of whom work on different aspects of minorities in Turkey and Greece. All who are interested in the Turkish Muslim minority in Greece and the Greek Orthodox minority in Turkey have invariably noted that a significant part of the problems in progress rises from the negative application of the principle of reciprocity, one of the major principles of international law and international relations.

Thus, any historical, political, legal or sociological analysis of these minorities obligatorily owes in account a square of interdependences between four poles: the two minorities, the Greek government and the Turkish government. To this square are added other “actors” such as the public opinion in Greece and Turkey, the international organizations working for the protection of the minorities like the Council of Europe, the networks of associations of the members of minorities emigrated into the “motherland” or elsewhere. All these actors who constitute some poles of interdependences have integrated also the concept of reciprocity.

When reference is made to schooling problems experienced by Turkey's Greek Orthodox minority, the Turkish government refers to the same type of problems in Western Thrace. When there are pressures on the Muslims of Greece, the Greek government points out the spectacular fall of the Greeks of Turkey, etc. And further still, in other fields of the Greco-Turkish conflict, the minorities were always the means of pressure or directly victims of reprisals and, this, with a dangerous extension of the sphere of activity of the same principle and always with a negative reading.

If one leans directly with the question of the minorities, one can also note that this sphere of activity was (and is always) almost unlimited. All the fields of the life of the minorities are concerned, from the political fields to the most private ones, from the education fields to the most technical ones. Thus, all of the contributors of this book denounce, rightly, the application of this principle if not the principle itself.

At the origin of this book, there is a meeting, held on July 7-9, 2005 in Strasbourg within the framework of the XIXth Congress of the AFEMAM (French Association of Studies on the Muslim and Arab World) organized by the French National Scientific Research Center laboratories: "Society, Law and Religion in Europe" and "Cultures and Societies in Europe". The central topic of the congress was "Muslims in Europe and Elsewhere - Others in Muslim Lands"

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